

AMENDMENT

Serial No: 09/462,995

- any patent application processing fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.17, to Deposit Account No.

18-1171.

Reconsideration of the outstanding rejection is respectfully requested in light of the following amendment and remark.

In the claims:

✓
Please amend claim 22 as follows:

B1
22. (Amended) A guar-free fluid for use in oil production, comprising a [deacetylated] xanthan gum having a percentage of acetyl groups in the range 0 to 3%, said xanthan gum being in the form of a polypentamer, [combined with] at least one compound which increases the ionic strength of the fluid, and at least one fluid loss control agent.

[Please amend claim 23 as follows:]

23. (Amended) A fluid according to claim 22, comprising 0.01% to 2% of [deacetylated] xanthan gum.

✓
Please cancel claim 29.

✓
Please amend claim 30 as follows:

B2
30. (Amended) A fluid according to claim [29] 22, wherein the percentage is 0 to 2%.

✓
Please cancel claim 31.

✓
Please amend claim 32 as follows:

B3
32. (Amended) A fluid according to claim [31] 22, wherein the fluid loss control agent is selected from the group consisting of cellulose compounds, polyacrylamides,

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B³
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high molecular weight polyacrylates, succinoglycanes, native starch, native starch derivatives, and charcoal.

Please amend claim 39 as follows:

B⁴
39. (Amended) A process for [the treatment of a guar-free oil drilling fluid, comprising the step of adding to said fluid a deacetylated xanthan gum in the form of a polypentamer, combined with at least one compound which increases the ionic strength of the fluid] carrying out drilling operations comprising the step of using, at a temperature of at most 140°C, a guar-free drilling fluid comprising a xanthan gum having a percentage of acetyl groups in the range 0 to 3%, said xanthan gum being in the form of a polypentamer, at least one compound which increases the ionic strength of the fluid, and at least one fluid loss control agent.

Please cancel claim 42.

Please amend claim 43 as follows:

B⁵
43. (Amended) A process according to claim [42] 39, wherein the fluid loss control agent is cellulose compounds, polyacrylamides, high molecular weight polyacrylates, succinoglycanes, native starch or charcoal.

[Please amend claim 44 as follows:]

44. (Amended) A fluid loss control agent for an oil drilling fluid, comprising a [deacetylate] xanthan gum having a percentage of acetyl groups in the range 0 to 3%, said xanthan gum being in the form of a polypentamer, at least one compound increasing the ionic strength of the fluid and at least one fluid loss control agent.

Please add the following new claim 45: